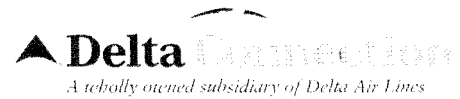


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FEB 22 2004



Atlantic Southeast Airlines, Inc.
100 Hartsfield Centre Parkway
Suite 800
Atlanta, GA 30354-1356

February 22, 2004

Federal Aviation Administration
Office of the Chief Council
Attention: Rules Docket (AGC-10)
800 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Sirs:

FAA-2004-17284-1

Atlantic Southeast Airlines (ASA), Inc., holder of Aircarrier Operating Certificate ASOA029B, requests an extension of the approval to utilize Exemption 7135 to 14 CFR part 121.434(1)(c)(ii). The original approval to utilize Exemption 7135 was issued March 7, 2000.

In February 2002, the original exemption was modified to allow an observation to be conducted from a passenger seat on the EMB-120 aircraft. ASA no longer operates the EMB-120 aircraft and therefore does not require the exemption as modified in 2002. We are requesting to extend the approval based on the original conditional requirements of Exemption 7135.

The petition for exemption for exemption is attached.

Sincerely,

John A. Bedson
Senior Vice President, Air Operations

/attachment

ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST AIRLINES
PETITION FOR EXEMPTION

2/24/2004

Federal Aviation Administration
Office of the Chief Council
Attention: Rules Docket (AGC-10)
800 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20591

SUBJECT: PETITION FOR GRANT OF EXEMPTION

Pursuant to Section 11.25 of the Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR), Atlantic Southeast Airlines (ASA), holder of Operating Certificate ASOA029B, hereby petitions the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for the renewal of the exemption from FAR Section 121.434(c)(1)(ii) to the extent necessary to permit ASA to observe the pilots in qualification observation as required by the aforementioned rule. This exemption renewal is requested in order for ASA to continue to perform this required observation as allowed by the previously approved Exemption 7135 and 7135A amended, which expires March 31, 2004.

NATURE AND EXTENT OF RELIEF

The exemption will allow a FAA authorized Check Airmen, in the employ of ASA, to conduct the required observation when a FAA inspector is unavailable to conduct the observation, as required by the below regulation:

FAR 121.434(c)(1)(ii)

... Pilot crewmembers must acquire operating experience and operating cycles as follows:

(1) A pilot in command must -

- (i) Perform the duties of a pilot in command under the supervision of a check pilot; and
- (ii) In addition, if a qualifying pilot in command is completing initial or upgrade training specified in § 121.424, be observed in the performance of prescribed duties by an FAA inspector during at least one flight leg which includes a takeoff and landing. During the time that a qualifying pilot in command is acquiring the operating experience in paragraphs (c)(1) (i) and (ii) of this section, a check pilot who is also serving as the pilot in command must occupy a pilot station. However, in the case of a transitioning pilot in command the check pilot serving as pilot in command may occupy the observer's seat, if the transitioning pilot has made at least two takeoffs and landings in the type airplane used, and has satisfactorily demonstrated to the check pilot that he is qualified to perform the duties of a pilot in command of that type of airplane.

This relief, to conduct the required observations as requested, will be implemented under previously approved guidelines which are:

1. Each check airman performing the duties otherwise appropriate to an FAA inspector, under this exemption, must:
 - a. Be an employee of ASA;
 - b. Be qualified and current in the duties of the PIC in the aircraft being operated;
 - c. Be approved by the FAA Aircrew Program Manager; and
 - d. Have been employed by ASA as a check airman for a minimum of 6 months.

ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST AIRLINES
PETITION FOR EXEMPTION

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2. ASA must submit and have approved by its FAA principal operations inspector (POI), in a letter of approval, the name of each check airman to be used under this exemption before this use occurs.
3. Before each observation conducted under this exemption, ASA must contact its POI or the POI's designated representative. No observation may be conducted under this exemption unless the FAA determines there is not an FAA inspector available to observe the affected operation and so informs ASA.
4. The check airman observing the qualifying pilot must be other than the check airman conducting the operating experience flight.
5. The check airman observing the flight may not previously have conducted any operating experience flight during the current, initial, or upgrade training of the qualifying PIC.
6. Each operation conducted under this exemption must be recorded in ASA's approved training records.
7. No observations may be conducted under this exemption until the qualifying PIC has completed the minimum number of hours specified in § 121.434 (c) (3).
8. Under this exemption, no more than 50 percent of the required operating experience observations may be accomplished by a qualified and authorized check airman rather than an FAA inspector during any 6-month period.
9. ASA must submit a training schedule in written form to its POI that includes the date(s) of each observation to be conducted under § 121.434. This training schedule must be submitted at least 20 days before any observation.
10. ASA must maintain the records necessary to demonstrate compliance with the conditions and limitations of this exemption.

PUBLIC INTEREST

Granting of this petition for exemption to permit an ASA Check Airman to conduct the required observation as previously outlined is in the public interest for reasons of safety, economics and being able to complete the requirements of the FAR in a timely manner. With the current staffing of the Certificate holding District Office (CHDO), the FAA is not always available to conduct the observation as scheduled. Allowing ASA to conduct the observation, when the FAA is unavailable, will allow for the completion of this pilot qualification element in a timely fashion, thereby reinforcing the training guidance given to the pilots in training.

EQUIVALENT LEVEL OF SAFETY

ASA believes that this proposal for the requested exemption renewal, will not merely provide an equivalent level of safety to operations under this present regulation, but will in fact, enhance safety. Operations under the exemption requested herein should enhance total air safety due to the observations being conducting by ASA will allow yet another review of the FAA approved pilot training program. These additional observations will provide valuable feedback to enhance the quality of the FAA approved pilot training program.

ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST AIRLINES
PETITION FOR EXEMPTION

2/24/2004

In summary, this exemption, in addition to supplementing the FAA staffing, will provide valuable information on the preparedness of the newly trained pilots. This exemption, in addition to making available additional resources, will allow an ASA Check Airman to evaluate the training and checking effort where experience has shown it to be most valuable.

Further, the conditions under which this exemption will be conducted and the reasons for the exemption have not changed since the exemption was originally approved in March of 2000. In February of 2002, the exemption was modified to allow for the FAA to monitor the observation flight from a passenger seat during the time the EMB-120 cockpit jumpseat was unavailable due to security concerns. As ASA no longer operates any EMB-120 aircraft under FAR 121 rules those guidelines and requirements are not included in this exemption renewal request.

EXCEPTIONS TO PUBLICATION OF SUMMARY OF PETITION FOR EXEMPTION

In accordance with the provisions of FAR 11.27(j)(3)(i) (Exceptions to Publication of Summary of Petition for Exemption), ASA requests that a finding of good cause be made for waiving publication in the Federal Register, since similar exemptions and waivers for this purpose have been granted to other Part 121 air carriers electing to conduct the observations required by FAR 121.434(1)(c)(ii). The justifications and supporting arguments are nearly identical to those presented by ASA. In view of the numerous opportunities to comment in the past, and the analysis previously done by FAA in the related industry cases, which ultimately resulted in grants of exemption, ASA requests that the publication and comment period be waived.

SUMMARY

As required by FAR Section 11.25(d), a summary of the petition is as follows:

Atlantic Southeast Airlines requests an exemption from FAR 121.434(1)(c)(ii), (FAA observation), to the extent necessary to permit authorized ASA Check Airmen to conduct the required pilot observation when a FAA inspector is unavailable.

Sincerely,



John A. Bedson
Senior Vice President, Air Operations

cc: Inspector David Shifflett
ASA Principal Operations Inspector